Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 OTTAWA 06450 01 OF 03 182338Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07
INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02
/075 W
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R 182252Z JUL 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION NATO
UDORRA/USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 OTTAWA 06450

USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: ELAB, ILO, CA
SUBJECT: GOC VIEWS ON ILO CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 102699; OTTAWA 6095 (NOTAL)

1. EXTAFF ASSISTANT UNDERSECRETARY BISSONNETTE ASKED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 06450 01 OF 03 182338Z

AMBASSADOR AND LABATT TO CALL JULY 18 TO PRESENT GOC
REPLY TO OUR MAY 10 AIDE MEMOIRE WHICH CITED THE FIVE
CRITICAL ISSUES CONTAINED IN STATE REFTEL. BISSONNETTE
POINTED OUT THAT HE WANTED GOC ASSESSMENT TO BE MADE
AVAILABLE PRIOR TO FINAL U.S. DECISION TO STAY OR WITHDRAW
FROM ILO. GOC'S TWO PRONGED APPROACH - MAINWARING'S
DISCUSSION WITH LABATT (SEE OTTAWA REFTEL) AND DETAILED

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

ANALYSIS CONTAINED IN AIDE MEMOIRE UNDERSCORES IMPORTANCE GOC ATTACHES TO OUR CONTINUED PRESENCE IN ILO.

2. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF AIDE MEMOIRE:

BEGIN TEXT: THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT HAS REVIEWED THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE IN THE LIGHT OF THE FIVE ISSUES AND OTHER MATTERS DEALT WITH IN THE AIDE MEMOIRE HANDED IN TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BY THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR, MR. THOMAS O. ENDERS, ON MAY 10. IN OUR VIEW THE CONFERENCE PRODUCED POSITIVE RESULTS. NO ONE COULD HAVE REASONABLY EXPECTED THAT THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS AND ATTITUDES WHICH RUN THROUGHOUT THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM WOULD HAVE BEEN ABSENT FROM THE ILO CONFERENCE. AT CERTAIN TIMES DURING THE CONFERENCE THE MAJORITY WHICH IS TO BE FOUND THROUGHOUT THE U.N. SYSTEM ASSERTED ITSELF. WE WERE INTERESTED TO NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT VARIOUS COUNTRIES FROM LATIN AMERICA, THE WEST INDIES, ASIA AND EVEN AFRICA DEFECTED FROM THIS MAJORITY. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS WAS DUE, AT LEAST IN PART, TO THE FACT THAT THE GROUP OF INDUSTRIALIZED MARKET ECONOMY COUNTRIES (IMEC GROUP) SHOWED SOLIDARITY THROUGHOUT THE CONFERENCE, AND THUS PROVIDED A POINT OF ATTRACTION FOR THE MORE MODERATE OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. MOREOVER, THE TRIPARTITE STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANIZATION CONTINUED TO DEMONSTRATE ITS EFFECTIVENESS ON MATTERS BEFORE THE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 06450 01 OF 03 182338Z

CONFERENCE, PARTICULARLY AT THE COMMITTEE LEVEL, EVEN THOUGH ON A VERY FEW ISSUES WORKER AND EMPLOYER DELEGATES DIVIDED ON THE POLITICAL LINES THAT CHARACTERIZE THE U.N. FAMILY TODAY.

WE WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT AS FOLLOWS ON THE FIVE PARTICULAR ISSUES MENTIONED IN THE AIDE MEMOIRE.

(1) THE UNITED STATES SAID IT WOULD VIGOROUSLY OPPOSE EFFORTS TO REVERSE THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNING BODY IN ITS FEBRUARY-MARCH MEETING CONCERNING THE RESO-LUTION CONDEMNING ISRAEL FOR ALLEGED VIOLATION OF TRADE UNION RIGHTS IN PALESTINE AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES; AND ALSO THAT IT WOULD OPPOSE ANY EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE A NEW RESOLUTION ALONG THE LINES OF THE 1974 RESOLUTION. THE UNITED STATES POSITION WAS SUPPORTED BY THE IMEC GROUP COUNTRIES, IN THE FACE OF A CONCERTED EFFORT LED BY ASIAN AND AFRICAN DELEGATES TO REVERSE THE DECISION OF THE GOVERNING BODY. A COMPROMISE SOLUTION, SET OUT BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, IN HIS LETTER OF JUNE 9, SEEMED TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL PARTICIPANTS. IN CONSEQUENCE A DRAFT RESOLUTION ATTACKING THE GOVERNING BODY'S DECISION, WHICH

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

HAD BEEN PREPARED BY THE ARAB COUNTRIES, WAS NOT PUT FORWARD, AND NO ACTION WAS TAKEN BY WAY OF FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1974 RESOLUTION.

(2) THE SECOND ISSUE RAISED BY THE UNITED STATES IN THE AIDE-MEMOIRE WAS THAT AN AMENDMENT SHOULD BE ADOPTED TO ARTICLE 17 OF THE CONFERENCE STANDING ORDERS, ESTABLISHING CRITERIA FOR EXCLUDING FROM THE CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS WHICH CONDEMN MEMBER STATES WITHOUT INVESTIGATION UNDER ILO PROCEDURES. THIS PROPOSAL WAS THOROUGHLY DEBATED, NOT IN

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 06450 02 OF 03 191007Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07
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R 182252Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 OTTAWA 06450

THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE AS HAD BEEN HOPED, BUT IN THE COMMITTEE ON STRUCTURE. IN SPITE OF COORDINATED ACTION BY THE IMEC GROUP OF COUNTRIES THE PROPOSAL FOR AN AMENDMENT WAS NOT ADOPTED. NEITHER WAS IT DEFEATED. THE PROPOSAL WAS REFERRED TO A WORKING PARTY ON STRUCTURE WHICH IS TO MEET IN GENEVA DURING THE WEEK BEGINNING OCTOBER 31. THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE NOTED

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

IN HIS CLOSING STATEMENT THAT THERE WAS BROAD ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE THAT A MEMBER STATE SHOULD NOT BE CONDEMNED WITHOUT PRIOR INVESTIGATION. IT CAN BE HOPED THAT PENDING THE ADOPTION BY THE CONFERENCE NEXT YEAR OF AN APPROPRIATE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 06450 02 OF 03 191007Z

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 17 THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE ILO WILL USE HIS EXISTING POWERS TO SCREEN OUT RESOLUTIONS OF A CONDEMNATORY NATURE. IF THIS IS SO, THEN THE PURPOSE OF THE U.S. PROPOSAL WILL HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED IN PRACTICE, BUT WE MUST ENSURE THAT AN APPROPRIATE WRITTEN TEXT IS PUT BEFORE THE CONFERENCE IN 1978.

(3) THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXPERTS ON THE APPLICATION OF CONVENTIONS WAS THE SUBJECT OF THOROUGH DISCUSSION BY THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE. IN THE OPINION OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT EQUAL TREATMENT WAS INDEED GIVEN (AS URGED IN THE AIDE MEMOIRE) TO VARIOUS CASES OF NON-COMPLIANCE REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL SYSTEMS. UNFORTUNATELY THE SUCCESS OF THE COMMITTEE WAS NOT MATCHED BY THE CONFERENCE IN PLENARY SESSION. A COMBINATION OF EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, SMARTING UNDER THE CRITICISM TO WHICH THEY HAD BEEN EXPOSED IN THE COMMITTEE, AND ARAB COUNTRIES, WHO MAINTAINED THAT NEITHER THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS NOR THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE IN FACT HAD JURISDICTION TO DEAL WITH ISRAELI ACTION IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES, RESULTED IN A SUFFICIENT QUANTITY OF ABSTENTIONS TO PREVENT THE COMMITTEE'S REPORT BEING ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT NOBODY VOTED AGAINST THE REPORT, AND THAT THE REPORT FORMS PART OF THE PERMANENT RECORD OF THE CONFERENCE. THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE PAID TRIBUTE TO "THE INESTIMABLE VALUE OF THE WORK DONE BY THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS". IN OUR VIEW THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE WAS SOMEWHAT MORE PRODUCTIVE THAN IN RECENT YEARS, AND THE ILO MACHINERY FOR REVIEW OF THE APPLICATION OF STANDARDS WILL CONTINUE ITS FUNCTIONS UNIMPAIRED.

(4) THE FOURTH POINT RAISED IN THE U.S. AIDE MEMOIRE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 06450 02 OF 03 191007Z

RELATED TO ATTEMPTS BY THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO INTRODUCE CHANGES IN ILO STRUCTURE. THE FEBRUARY-MARCH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY HAD AGREED TO DEFER FURTHER SESSIONS OF THE WORKING PARTY ON STRUCTURE UNTIL NOVEMBER AND THIS DECISION WAS CONFIRMED BY THE CONFERENCE. DURING

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

THE MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ON STRUCTURE, THE GROUP OF 77 INTRODUCED A PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD HAVE PROVIDED SPECIFICALLY FOR A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ILO CONFERENCE IN 1979 TO BE DEVOTED TO STRUCTURE IN THE EVENT THAT THE WORKING PARTY FAILED TO REACH FINAL AGREEMENT. THIS PROPOSAL, THANKS TO THE FIRM POSITION OF THE IMEC GROUP, WAS NOT ACTED ON. THERE WILL THUS BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR FURTHER EFFORTS TO HANDLE ISSUES OF STRUCTURE THROUGH THE LOW-KEY INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS ENVISAGED IN THE AIDE-MEMOIRE.

(5) THE FIFTH ITEM OF IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES, THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BODY, WAS SATISFACTORILY RESOLVED THROUGH THE ELECTION OF JOE MORRIS.

TO SUM UP, ON POINTS (1) (4) AND (5) RAISED IN THE U.S. AIDE MEMOIRE, THERE WAS CLEAR-CUT VICTORY AND ON POINTS (2) AND (3) THERE WAS PARTIAL VICTORY. WE BELIEVE THESE RESULTS ARE ACCEPTABLE, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE PRESENT BALANCE OF POWER THROUGHOUT THE U.N. SYSTEM.

IN ANY OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF ILO PERFORMANCE IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED ALSO THAT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE IS ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG SO FAR AS ILO ACTIVITIES ARE CONCERNED. THE MAJOR WORK OF THE ILO IS CARRIED OUT BY THE OFFICE

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 06450 03 OF 03 191010Z
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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 OTTAWA 06450

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE GOVERNING BODY. THE ILO'S
MAIN ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

THE WORLD EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMME;

IMPROVEMENT OF WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT (PIACT
PROGRAMME);

TRIPARTISM AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (INCLUDING WORKER
EDUCATION);

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE LABOUR FIELD (INCLUDING THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 OTTAWA 06450 03 OF 03 191010Z

ILO'S INVESTIGATIVE MACHINERY).

IT IS THE GOVERNING BODY WHICH DEBATES THESE PROGRAMMES IN
DEPTH AND SUPERVISES THEIR APPLICATION. THE IMEC
COUNTRIES, ALTHOUGH NOT POSSESSING A NUMERICAL
MAJORITY OF GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS, PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN
ILO POLICY DEVELOPMENT. THIS LEADERSHIP WOULD BE
DISASTEROUSLY WEAKENED SHOULD THE UNITED STATES ABDICATE
ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AS THE LEADING INDUSTRIALIZED
COUNTRY WITH THE LARGEST FREE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SYSTEM,
AND WITH ITS RECENTLY RENEWED DEDICATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS.

IN RECENT MONTHS THE UNITED STATES HAS DEMONSTRATED HOW
EFFECTIVE ITS PARTICIPATION IN ILO MEETINGS CAN BE, AND
HAS HELPED THE IMEC GROUP TO REALIZE THE BENEFITS OF
SOLIDARITY IN A CONTEXT OF TRIPARTISM. WE URGE THAT THE
UNITED STATES CONTINUE AND FORTIFY ITS ROLE IN THE ILO.
THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT HAS INFORMALLY SUGGESTED THAT THE
IMEC COUNTRIES MIGHT MEET, IN THE COMING MONTHS, TO CONDUCT
THEIR OWN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF ILO PROGRAMMES, AIMS AND
PURPOSES, IN ORDER TO CONSOLIDATE POINTS OF VIEW, CONSIDER
PRIORITIES, AND EXERCISE EFFECTIVE INFLUENCE ON PROGRAMME
DIRECTIONS. WE HAVE DEFERRED MAKING A FORMAL PROPOSAL
UNTIL THE UNITED STATES HAS DECIDED WHETHER TO REMAIN IN
THE ILO. SHOULD THE UNITED STATES MAKE A POSITIVE DECISION,
THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD LOOK FORWARD TO PROMOTING
SUCH A MEETING AND WOULD ALSO LOOK FORWARD TO A CONTINUA-
TION OF THE BILATERAL CONTACTS WHICH HAVE PROVED SO USEFUL

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

OVER RECENT MONTHS.

WE BELIEVE, FINALLY, THAT THE MAJOR REASON FOR A CONTINUING ACTIVE IMEC INFLUENCE IN THE ILO IS THAT THIS ORGANIZATION, MORE THAN ANY OTHER SPECIALIZED AGENCY, IS CONCERNED WITH CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 OTTAWA 06450 03 OF 03 191010Z

HUMAN RIGHTS AND WITH THEIR APPLICATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. WE CAN EXPECT TO BE DEFEATED FROM TIME TO TIME ON SPECIFIC ISSUES AT THE ILO CONFERENCE, AND EVEN AT OTHER ILO MEETINGS. THE IMPORTANT THING WILL BE TO MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF THE ORGANIZATION, ITS TRIPARTITE STRUCTURE, AND ITS ABILITY TO CONDUCT ITS BASIC WORK EFFECTIVELY EVEN IN SPITE OF THE NEGATIVE INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL DEBATES AT THE CONFERENCE. PROGRESS HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE IN ATTRACTING VARIOUS OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO IMEC POSITIONS AND IT MAY BE HOPED THAT THIS PROGRESS WILL ACCELERATE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. IN THIS WAY THE VALUES THAT THE ILO REPRESENTS WILL SPREAD AND PROSPER. WE URGE ON THE UNITED STATES A CONTINUING ROLE OF LEADER-SHIP IN THIS ENDEAVOR. END TEXT. ENDERS

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Attributes

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EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
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